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University of Western Ontario Anthropology Society Academic Symposium 2006

Assessing Pre-Dorset Technological Organization on the Churchill West Peninsula

Jake Anderson

The Churchill West Peninsula (CWP) of north-eastern Manitoba represents the southern extreme of Pre-Dorset occupation in the Subarctic barren grounds. In the summer of 2005, several archaeological sites were surveyed and excavated on the CWP, including a Pre-Dorset site called IeKn-12. My M.A. research seeks to assess Pre-Dorset strategies of technological organization at this site through lithic (stone tool and debitage) analysis. In doing so, I hope to contribute to our understanding of Pre-Dorset occupation in Subarctic regions, which have largely been neglected from archaeological studies. This presentation summarizes the excavation of IeKn-12, and current interpretations about Pre-Dorset technological organization at this site.

The Modernity of Witchcraft: Current Manifestations and Western Conspiracy

Ellen Brown

Witchcraft is alive and thriving in Africa and Southeast Asia. The result of the forces of modernity and globalization has been argued to justify the prevalence of witchcraft and sorcery. Given this justification, and the terms of modernity in the African and Southeast Asian dialogue, similar forces are active in the western discourse of conspiracy theory and conspiratorial thinking. The linkage between witchcraft and conspiracy on the surface may not be apparent, but with closer inspection it becomes obvious that both are caused by the influences of modernity. Within the discourse of modernity it is evident that both ideologies implore the participant to seek beyond the surface and delve into the unknown.

What's in a Name? A Short, Personal, and Purely Hypothetical Look at Onomastics

Gordon J. Brown

In this presentation I examine a number of attempts to generate a "theory of names" whereby a set of trends can be constructed to explain and understand why people are given their first names. By way of a thought experiment I hope to make the trends of male and female names apparent. I also note the apparent transition of male names to unisex names, and then female names (but not the other way around), and conclude that any "theory of names", while ambitious, is inherently flawed. Most work has focussed on English names, which limits the study. Also, the matter of gender and sex is overlooked. Ultimately, the shortcomings of any theory are too substantial for any "theory of names" to be of any practical use.

The Pre-Dorset and Dorset: Misrepresentations of the Transition

Jennifer Debono

It is estimated that the climate in the Arctic began a cooling trend at approximately 3000BC. Primarily, these shifts in temperature have been proposed as the factor influencing cultural shifts in the Dorset groups of the Hudson Bay, Hudson Strait and Foxe Basin regions. In particular, these changes personify the transition from Pre-Dorset to Dorset, as identified in the archaeological record. However, dating in these regions has identified occupation by the Pre-Dorset at approximately 1700BC. This indicates that cultural occupation by Dorset groups began 1300 years after the climate began changing. This also indicates that cultural changes seen in the archaeological record may not be simply forced by environmental change, but caused by more 'human' factors. As supported by Nagy (2000), these groups may have had ample time to adapt to their environment, even with changes occurring. This adaptation may have led to a

close relationship with the land and its resources, allowing the Pre-Dorset and Dorset groups to change as the environment changed, resulting in the transitions seen in the archaeological record. This presupposition is supported by evidence of continuity in dwellings, subsistence practices, mobility patterns and technology. This continuity, evidenced in the archeological record, points towards the need for change in the methods used to identify Pre-Dorset and Dorset groups. Namely, it can be suggested that rather than Pre-Dorset and Dorset as separate groups, they may be identified as a single group, with distinctions made between Early and Late periods.

Surviving Newfoundland: Cultural Adaptations in an Unpredictable Environment

Anne Hamilton

The island of Newfoundland has been host to a number of indigenous populations over the past 5000 years, all of whom, until very recently, were assumed to have become extinct. In an attempt to explain the successive extinctions and repopulations of the island, or the "boom and bust" phenomenon, Tuck and Pastore presented a hypothetical model which targeted the unpredictable environment of Newfoundland as the source of the extinctions. The fate of the inhabitants was left in the hands of the environment. Renouf, Schwarz, and Leblanc have re-opened the discussion by presenting a new hypothesis which present hunter-gatherer groups as being able to adapt to the unpredictable environment by creating risk-reducing mechanisms. They have argued that the fate of indigenous populations was not absolutely controlled by the environment. Instead, cultural adaptations played an important role in shaping their lives. This paper will focus on the Groswater Palaeoeskimos who inhabited the Island between 2800 and 1900 BP, to further explore and hopefully establish that the indigenous populations of the Island were not solely controlled by the environment.

American and Canadian Approaches to Repatriation

Christopher A. J. L. Little

The control over one's cultural patrimony is now considered to be a fundamental right of all cultures, large and small, and is thus a relatively recent conception. Associated with this idea is repatriation—the re-appropriation of cultural objects. Though traditionally pertaining to prisoners of war, emigrants, and booty looted during conflict, it has come to be associated with the attempts of Indigenes to solicit the return of objects and remains that have been misappropriated. This aspect of repatriation is the outgrowth of decades of activism by Aboriginals to reacquire their material heritage. Likewise, the process marks the most recent site of conflict between Aboriginals and archaeologists, museologists, collectors, politicians, and the nation-states into which they have been incorporated.

A cursory history of the relationship between archaeologists and Aboriginals will establish something of a background on which to base an examination of the mechanisms available to repatriate items in the context of the United States and Canada. This, in turn, raises issues about repatriation at the international level. Problems with and criticisms of these respective models will be highlighted, thus demonstrating that neither means of repatriation represent a satisfactory solution to the problems posed by the issue. The importance of repatriation to Aboriginal communities will be illustrated as an argument in favour of the practice. Additionally, an effort to refute arguments against repatriation will be presented. This will form the basis for the advocacy of strengthened efforts to repatriate objects.